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1012

St Louis May 15 1807

Dear Sir

A few days ago a Deputation from Several Bands of the Sioux Inhabiting the borders of the Missouri arrived at this place with Mr Dennison Sub Agent (Appointed by Genl Wilkinson) for the Missouri. On their way down they were fired on by a party of Indians supposed to be Ottoes, which has Alarmed them very much Those Sioux have requested protection & Asked forgiveness for their past Conduct and wish to be on friendly terms with our Government they also request to be sent in safety to their Country. These Bands of Sioux are numerous and from their situation and habits it is in my Opinion important that the Utmost exertions of their Solicitations and be on the most friendly terms with them

I shall furnish this deputation with Medals and Flags which they view as valued emblements of attachment and protection Also such other Articles as may be necessary at this time to please and give them an exalted opinion of the Paternal affection of our government I have also reason to believe that the Secretary of War had no Expectation that those Savage Bands would seek the protection of our Government so early as this and he has made no Arrangements for their returning in safety to their Country

I have no Authority to demand a Military protection but under the view you may have of this Subject if you should think yourself justifiable in furnishing a small Detachment for the protection of those people (residing 1200 miles up the Missouri) to their Country in safety it would dignify and most probably facilitate the ends which the Government wishes to promote the best harmony with all the Indians in that Quarter

The Boats which I have purchased for the Detachment for the Mandans will require thirteen men independent of a Sergeant

With the highest respect I have the honor to be your most Obed Servt

Wm Clark Cap Lieut

Copy of William
Clarke's letter 15th
May 1807